

Fall 8-15-2000

ENG 3009G-003-007

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30096-003
-007

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English 3009G.

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Course Description.

We will take semiotic approach to myth as "language" as we discuss texts, art, music, and film from a range of cultures.

Texts.

Allen, Without Sanctuary, <http://www.hournale.com/withoutsanctuary/main.html>
Chan, Wing-Tsit, *A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy*.
Chandler, Semiotics for Beginners, <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/semiotic.html>
Chatwin, *The Songlines*.
Ellison, *Invisible Man*.
Fluxus Portal. www.fluxus.org
Humphries, *Ovid: The Metamorphoses*.
Kerouac, *On the Road*.
Kingston, *The Woman Warrior*.
Merchant, *Earthcare*.
Meyeroff, *Peyote Hunt*.
Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks*.
Nguyen, *Tale of Kieu*.
Powers, *Yuwipi*.
Rhodes, *Outsider Art*.
Robinson, *The Debt*, http://www.will.uiuc.edu/WILL_Content/AM_Focus_580_Webcasts.htm
Sandars, *Gilgamesh*.
Snyder, *No Nature*.

Requirements and Evaluation.

Regular attendance and participation. (You will be allowed 2 absences. I will lower your final grade by one letter for each unexcused absence thereafter.)

Hourly examinations and take-home assignments. There will be about 8 in-class examinations, consisting of short answer questions on our assigned reading, and an essay question. They will not be announced in advance. You can (and need) only "prepare" for them by preparing for class. Make-up examinations will not be offered, but a short may be substituted for *one* examination. I will also ask you to complete 4 short papers/assignments. Extensions will not be granted for these. (70% of grade.)

Final examination. This will consist of a short-answer component and a 5-page essay, the latter to be written in advance of the examination day. (30% of grade.)

You must complete all course requirements punctually to receive a passing grade in the course.

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive accommodations, which I will gladly provide, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

I: Semiotics, the Origins of Life on Earth, and Raw Art.

Week of...

August 21 and August 28

Chandler, *Semiotics for*

Beginners. <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/semiotic.html>

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. (Page numbers TBA)

Discussion: The origins of life. The Pygmalion myth in contemporary America. Pythagorean vegetarianism vs. food for "real" people.

September 4

Powers, *Yuwipi*.

Discussion: Sign and symbol. Myth and ritual. The Shaman. Spiritual and borderline experiences. Sweat lodge, Vision Quest, Healing.

September 11

Meyeroff, *Peyote Hunt*.

Discussion: Beauty and Being. Art/Work and Religion. Domains (personal, familiar, communal, public). History in Myth. The Quest.

September 18

Chatwin, *The Songlines*.

Discussion: Colonialism and monocultures of the mind. Materialism and voluntary poverty.

Group work on Australian artist Gordon Bennett.

View excerpts of *Mad Max*.

September 25

Rhodes, *Outsider Art*.

Fluxus Portal. www.fluxus.org

Discussion: Notions of sanity and madness. Institutions. Commodification.

II: Interlude:

In and Around the Middle Kingdom

October 2 and October 9

Chan, *Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy*. (Page numbers, TBA.)

Discussion: Confucius, Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, T'ang Dynasty Poetry.

October 16

Du, *The Tale of Kieu*.

Discussion: "Yin" civilization. The Female hero. Beauty. Karma.

October 23

The Scent of Green Papayas.

October 30

Kingston, *The Woman Warrior*.

III. American Barbarism.

November 6

Sandars, *Gilgamesh*. Merchant, *Earthcare*.

Discussion: Origins of the American Hero. Fear of death and the quest for immortality.

Woman:Nature = Man:Culture? Ecocatastrophe.

View excerpts of *Terminator*.

November 13 and November 27

Ellison, *Invisible Man*.

Discussion: The Anti-hero. Jazz, "Signifying," and the dozens. Booker T. Washington and Marcus Garvey.

Postcards from lynchings. Randall Johnson, *The Debt*.

View excerpts of *Boys in the Hood*.

December 4

Kerouac, *On the Road*, selected poems from Snyder, *No Nature*.

Discussion: Beat and Counter-cultures. TV and Suburbia. Violence and indifference.

Appropriation vs. theft. "White Indians." Gaia. Building a house. The nick of time.